

## STRATEGIC FOCUS

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) office opened in the Royal Kingdom of Lesotho in 2007. CDC supports an integrated continuum of HIV and tuberculosis (TB) services, including improvements in public health policies, prevention, treatment, health management information systems, and public health laboratory capacity. In close partnership with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and implementing partners, CDC is integral in providing technical assistance (TA) and administrative leadership in its program areas.

### Comprehensive HIV Treatment and Prevention Services

CDC works closely with the MOH and other in-country partners to scale-up HIV prevention and treatment services, including preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission, HIV testing, antiretroviral therapy (ART) initiation services, integrated TB/HIV service delivery, and program activities using a targeted, district-based approach. CDC provides technical leadership in building human capacity for HIV/TB treatment programs through direct service delivery, TA, and mentoring health workers.

### Strengthening Laboratory Systems

CDC provides TA to implement quality laboratory systems for diagnosis, clinical monitoring, and evaluation of new test technologies. CDC, in partnership with its implementing partners, provides the necessary technical expertise in developing local capacity for effective coordination of laboratory programs, diagnostic services, information systems, and clinical services to improve national, regional, and clinical facility level public health service quality.

### Strengthening Strategic Information

CDC and its implementing partners support Lesotho's efforts to implement population-based health information surveys and public health surveillance, monitoring and evaluation, and health information systems needed to advance the national HIV response, guide public health programming, and use data to inform decision-making and public health policies and associated implementation.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**HIV Treatment Services:** CDC supports the national implementation of the World Health Organization's Consolidated Guidelines on the Use of Antiretroviral Drugs for Treating and Preventing HIV Infection. CDC's treatment support is focused on assisting Lesotho to attain and sustain UNAIDS' 95-95-95 HIV targets across all age groups and sex, with CDC's TA focused in four of Lesotho's ten districts (Berea, Leribe, Qacha's Nek, and Quthing), optimizing ART for adults and children.

**TB/HIV:** CDC works closely with the MOH to improve ART uptake among people living with HIV (PLHIV) who have TB infection. Approximately 59 percent of persons with TB in Lesotho are co-infected with HIV. CDC-funded HIV clinical services integrate TB activities to identify and treat TB/HIV co-infection, increase uptake of TB preventive therapy, and enhance effective TB case finding and treatment using the WHO-approved, molecular diagnostics, chest x-rays, computer-aided diagnostics, and shortened TB treatment regimens.

**HIV Testing Services:** CDC provides TA to improve the diagnostic and treatment quality and cost-effectiveness and to expand HIV testing services, including HIV self-testing, index testing and partner notification, recency testing, and use of HIV risk screening tools. CDC has played a critical role in Lesotho's achievement of 90 percent of PLHIV knowing their HIV status, including services for Adolescent Girls and Young Women through the DREAMS initiative in four districts: Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek.

**Laboratory Systems:** CDC provides TA to Lesotho's laboratory professionals, increasing their skills. CDC has supported the expansion of laboratory facilities, quality improvement in HIV viral load (VL) testing, and improvement in the procurement of VL tests, early infant diagnosis laboratory test reagents, and TB test supplies.

**Strategic Information:** CDC supported the second Lesotho Population-based HIV Impact Assessment (LePHIA), a national survey conducted in 2020 that included HIV risk factors, incidence, and biomarkers. Results demonstrated 90percent of persons ≥15 years of age living with HIV had been diagnosed, 97percent of those diagnosed were on ART, and 92percent were virally suppressed. These results indicate that Lesotho reached the UNAIDS goal of 90-90-90 by 2020 and is well positioned to meet the goal of 95-95-95 by 2025.

**COVID-19:** CDC is supporting Lesotho to accelerate equitable access and delivery of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccinations through supporting COVID-19 testing for surveillance and outbreak control and improved reporting of COVID-19 cases to public health systems. CDC also supports Lesotho in mitigating COVID-19 transmission across borders, in communities, in healthcare facilities, and among healthcare workers, and minimizing disruptions to essential health services.

**Our success is built on the backbone of science and strong partnerships.**

September 2022 | The CDC Division of Global HIV & TB activities are implemented as part of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); non-HIV related TB activities are supported by non-PEPFAR funding

### Key Country Leadership

Prime Minister:  
Moeketsi Majoro

Minister of Health:  
Semano Sekatle

U.S. Ambassador:  
Maria Brewer

CDC/DGHT Director:  
Shirley Lecher (Acting)

**Country Quick Facts**  
([worldbank.org/en/where-we-work](http://worldbank.org/en/where-we-work))

Per Capita GNI:  
\$1,270 (2021)

Population (millions):  
2.16 (2021)

Under 5 Mortality:  
89.5/1,000 live births (2020)

Life Expectancy:  
55 years (2020).

**Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic**  
([aidsinfo.unaids.org](http://aidsinfo.unaids.org))

Estimated HIV Prevalence  
(Ages 15-49): 20.9% (2021)

Estimated AIDS Deaths  
(Age ≥15): 4,000 (2021)

Estimated Orphans Due to  
AIDS: 110,000 (2021)

Reported Number  
Receiving Antiretroviral  
Therapy (ART) (Age ≥15):  
226,200 (2021)

**Global Tuberculosis  
(TB) Epidemic**  
([who.int/tb/country/data/profiles/en](http://who.int/tb/country/data/profiles/en))

Estimated TB Incidence:  
650/100,000 population  
(2020)

TB Patients with Known HIV  
Status who are HIV-Positive:  
59% (2020)

TB Treatment Success Rate:  
78% (2019)

### DGHT Country Staff: 10

Locally Employed Staff: 7  
Direct Hires: 3  
Contractors: 0

